



Chalk Talk

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PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES !!!**Letter from the Editor**

Dear Educators:

On June 15, 2012, Nik Wallenda, great grandson of the legendary aerialist, Karl Wallenda, became the first person in history to walk over Niagara Falls on a high wire, crossing at the widest point, from the United States to Canada. As a kid, growing up in the Niagara region, 'The Falls' as we referred to them, were at the centre of all mythology. I had worn the yellow raincoat in the Scenic Tunnels which take you to a spot alongside the curtain of torrential falling water. I had braved the Maid of the Mist boat trip more than once to arrive at the place in those churning waters at the base of the Falls where you look up to see the 'tiny' tourists dotted along the stone and metal barrier. Who could resist having their picture taken on Clifton Hill in the barrel going over the Falls?

Perhaps it meant more to me because I know that location so well, that river, that heavy mist, that terrain, that gorge -- and those rapids, immortalized in the great 1953 film, *Niagara*, which starred Marilyn Monroe. I couldn't believe the authorities had given him permission to attempt it at all, let alone to allow him to do it at night. Even though Nik had unwillingly agreed to be tethered to the wire, I was afraid for him. He had joked earlier in the day that the worst that could happen would be for him to fall and have to pull himself up onto the wire where he would sit and wait for helicopters to pick him up. This plan sounds simple but would have been very dangerous for those in the rescue team.

I was transfixed by the live broadcast. From the moment he took his first step, the whipping winds pelted him with the moisture laden air. Nik had only the voice of his father speaking to him through an earphone to keep him company. With every step, my heart would sink, then soar. No turning back. No looking down. Half way across he seemed to disappear into the mist. He later confirmed that he couldn't see or hear anything.

For four summers I worked my way through university as a border guard at one of the bridges. I have to admit I smiled when, upon his arrival on the Canadian side, he was met by a Canadian immigration officer who asked him to present his passport. I knew that script well having asked thousands for their reason for wanting to enter Canada. Nik simply said he wanted "to inspire people around the world". I think he did.

This week's issue features an essay competition encouraging students to write about people who have made an impact on society in 2013. CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting teachers by providing access to free classroom resources and programs. We invite you to visit our website at www.4edu.ca.

Mary Kovack

A&E Classroom 2013 Essay Contest

A&E Canadian Classroom's 'LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST' challenges students in grades 5-12 to write an original 300 word essay on the life of a person they believe made the biggest difference on Canadian society in the past year. Students can win cash prizes for themselves and teachers can win cash prizes for their classrooms.



YOU'D SMILE TOO IF ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS WON \$3,000

The submissions will be judged by a national panel of education experts and A&E representatives. The essays will be judged based on the following criteria: persuasiveness (1/3), creativity (1/3) and relevancy (1/3). Two winners from each grade level — 5th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade — will be selected.

GRAND PRIZE:

- Student: **\$3,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

FIRST PLACE PRIZE:

- Student: **\$2,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

[Note: Due to Provincial restrictions the contest is void in Quebec.]

Each entry must include the student's name, complete address, postal code, telephone number, age, grade, name of teacher, school, school address, and local cable system (if known).

Please note that there are two ways to enter:

- Online at the A&E Canadian Classroom's website at: <http://www.livesthatmakeadifference.com/>
- Entries can also be mailed to:
LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST, c/o Temple Scott Associates, 95 King Street East, 4th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5C 1G4.

Check out the *Lives That Make a Difference* Facebook page for more details and join the conversation!

Educators are encouraged to have students in their civics, social studies, current events, literacy and history classes participate in this year's contest.

This year's deadline is December 11th, 2013!

For official contest rules and a consent form, please visit <http://www.livesthatmakeadifference.com/>.

The 2013
Lives that make a Difference
 Essay Contest

The heroes that make a difference...
 in and out of your classroom

\$3,000

Last Spring, A&E Television Networks awarded cash prizes to the winners of its **2012 Lives That Make a Difference Essay Contest**. The winners represent schools from Ontario and British Columbia. The Grand Prize winners received a \$3,000 cash prize and an additional \$1,000 for their teacher for use in the classroom. First Prize winners received \$2,000 cash prize and an additional \$1,000 for use by their teacher in the classroom. Each of the winning schools also received an A&E prize package comprised of a television, DVD player, and classic A&E DVDs.

Winning entries reflected students' interest in topics as diverse as record breaking science, nation-building, the human spirit, and teenage suicide and bullying. Here's a look at last year's winners:

Grades 5 to 8

Grand Prize winner, Lauren Liu, Grade 7 student at Fisher Park Elementary in Ottawa wrote movingly about the rise in teenage suicides due to bullying and the efforts being made across Canada to draw attention to this disturbing trend and to implement support networks to help teenagers to cope.

First Prize winner, Reef Gladwin, Grade 8 student at Bayside Middle School in Brentwood, British Columbia wrote about Felix Baumgartner, the first human to break the sound barrier with a vehicle. On October 14, 2012, this daredevil jumped 'free fall' style into aerospace history, contributing significantly to the understanding of the physical limits of human beings.

Grades 9 to 12

Grand Prize winner, Ariel Becherer, Grade 12 student at Mark R. Isfeld SS in Courtenay, British Columbia wrote about the legacy of Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau in creating our Canadian identity, instituting official bilingualism, the repatriation of the Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedom, and the advancement of a just, equal and multicultural society.

First Prize winner, Kiera Schuller, Grade 12 student at West Vancouver SS in West Vancouver, British Columbia wrote about the inspiring life of Malala Yousafzai, the 14-year-old girl who was shot by the Taliban for advocating for girls' education. Her courageous story reminds us all to never to take our freedoms for granted.

To read all of the winning entries from 2012, [click here](http://www.livesthatmakeadifference.com/winners.html) or go to www.livesthatmakeadifference.com/winners.html.

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CLASSROOM

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The **Idea Book** is sent free of charge to teachers who request it. To receive your complimentary copy in the mail, [click here](#) or on any of the following icons:

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📞 416.955.9526
📠 416.955.0815

THE COMPANY FOR EDUCATION COMMUNICATIONS INC.

66 George St., 3rd floor • Toronto, ON, Canada, M5A 4K8 • www.4edu.ca • info@4edu.ca

